

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
POSTAL REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, DC 20268-0001

Before Commissioners:

Ruth Y. Goldway, Chairman;
Mark Acton, Vice Chairman;
Nanci E. Langley; and
Robert G. Taub

Odin Post Office
Odin, Minnesota

Docket No. A2012-93

NOTICE AND ORDER ACCEPTING APPEAL AND
ESTABLISHING PROCEDURAL SCHEDULE

(December 29, 2011)

Notice is hereby given that, pursuant to 39 U.S.C. 404(d), the Commission received two petitions for review of the Postal Service's determination to close the Odin post office in Odin, Minnesota. The first petition for review received November 30, 2011, was filed by Paul S. Berg. The second petition for review received November 30, 2011, was filed by Robert D. Harder. The earliest postmark date is November 19, 2011. The Commission hereby institutes a proceeding under 39 U.S.C. 404(d)(5) and establishes Docket No. A2012- 93 to consider Petitioners' appeal. If Petitioners would like to further explain their position with supplemental information or facts, Petitioners may either file a Participant Statement on PRC Form 61 or file a brief with the Commission no later than January 5, 2012.

Notwithstanding the Postal Service's determination to close this post office, on December 15, 2011, the Postal Service advised the Commission that it "will delay the closing or consolidation of any Post Office until May 15, 2012"¹. The Postal Service further indicated that it "will proceed with the discontinuance process for any Post Office in which a Final Determination was already posted as of December 12, 2011, including all pending appeals." *Id.* It stated that the only "Post Offices" subject to closing prior to May 16, 2012 are those that were not in operation on, and for which a Final Determination was posted as of, December 12, 2011. It affirmed that it "will not close or consolidate any other Post Office prior to May 16, 2012." *Id.* Lastly, the Postal Service requested the Commission "to continue adjudicating appeals as provided in the 120-day decisional schedule for each proceeding." *Id.*

The Postal Service's Notice outlines the parameters of its newly announced discontinuance policy. Pursuant to the Postal Service's request, the Commission will fulfill its appellate responsibilities under 39 U.S.C. § 404(d)(5).

Categories of issues apparently raised. Petitioners contend that (1) the Postal Service failed to consider whether or not it will continue to provide a maximum degree of effective and regular postal services to the community (see 39 U.S.C. 404(d)(2)(A)(iii)); and (2) the Postal Service failed to provide substantial evidence in support of the determination (see 39 U.S.C. 404(d)(5)(c)).

After the Postal Service files the administrative record and the Commission reviews it, the Commission may find that there are more legal issues than those set forth above, or that the Postal Service's determination disposes of one or more of those issues. The deadline for the Postal Service to file the applicable administrative record is within 15 days after the date on which the petition for review was filed with the Commission. See 39 CFR 3001.113. In addition, the due date for any responsive pleading by the Postal Service is also within 15 days after the date on which the petition for review was filed with the Commission.

¹ United States Postal Service Notice of Status of the Moratorium on Post Office Discontinuance Actions, December 15, 2011, (Notice).

Availability; website posting. The Commission has posted the appeal and supporting material on its website at <http://www.prc.gov>. Additional filings in this case and participant's submissions also will be posted on the website, if provided in electronic format or amenable to conversion, and not subject to a valid protective order. Information on how to use the Commission's website is available online or by contacting the Commission's webmaster via telephone at 202-789-6873 or via electronic mail at prc-webmaster@prc.gov.

The appeal and all related documents are also available for public inspection in the Commission's docket section. Docket section hours are 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., eastern time, Monday through Friday, except on Federal government holidays. Docket section personnel may be contacted via electronic mail at prc-dockets@prc.gov or via telephone at 202-789-6846.

Filing of documents. All filings of documents in this case shall be made using the Internet (Filing Online) pursuant to Commission rules 9(a) and 10(a) at the Commission's website, <http://www.prc.gov>, unless a waiver is obtained. See 39 CFR 3001.9(a) and 3001.10(a). Instructions for obtaining an account to file documents online may be found on the Commission's website, <http://www.prc.gov>, or by contacting the Commission's docket section at prc-dockets@prc.gov or via telephone at 202-789-6846.

Commission reserves the right to redact personal information which may infringe on an individual's privacy rights from documents filed in this proceeding.

Intervention. Persons, other than the Petitioners and respondents, wishing to be heard in this matter are directed to file a notice of intervention. See 39 CFR 3001.111(b). Notices of intervention in this case are to be filed on or before January 23, 2012. A notice of intervention shall be filed using the Internet (Filing Online) at the Commission's website, <http://www.prc.gov>, unless a waiver is obtained for hardcopy filing. See 39 CFR 3001.9(a) and 3001.10(a).

Further procedures. By statute, the Commission is required to issue its decision within 120 days from the date it receives the appeal. See 39 U.S.C. 404(d)(5). A

procedural schedule has been developed to accommodate this statutory deadline. In the interest of expedition, in light of the 120-day decision schedule, the Commission may request the Postal Service or other participants to submit information or memoranda of law on any appropriate issue. As required by Commission rules, if any motions are filed, responses are due 7 days after any such motion is filed. See 39 CFR 3001.21.

It is ordered:

1. The procedural schedule listed below is hereby adopted.
2. Pursuant to 39 U.S.C. 505, Pamela A. Thompson is designated officer of the Commission (Public Representative) to represent the interests of the general public.
3. The Secretary shall arrange for publication of this Notice and Order and Procedural Schedule in the *Federal Register*.

By the Commission.

Shoshana M. Grove
Secretary

PROCEDURAL SCHEDULE

November 30, 2011	Filing of Appeal
December 15, 2011	Deadline for the Postal Service to file the applicable administrative record in this appeal
December 15, 2011	Deadline for the Postal Service to file any responsive pleading.
January 23, 2012	Deadline for notices to intervene (see 39 CFR 3001.111(b))
January 4, 2012	Deadline for Petitioner's Form 61 or initial brief in support of the petition (see 39 CFR 3001.115(a) and (b))
January 24, 2012	Deadline for answering brief in support of the Postal Service (see 39 CFR 3001.115(c))
February 8, 2012	Deadline for reply briefs in response to answering briefs (see 39 CFR 3001.115(d))
February 15, 2012	Deadline for motions by any party requesting oral argument; the Commission will schedule oral argument only when it is a necessary addition to the written filings (see 39 CFR 3001.116)
March 16, 2012	Expiration of the Commission's 120-day decisional schedule (see 39 U.S.C. 404(d)(5))